

**AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:**

Page 1, replace the first full paragraph with the amended paragraph as follows

The invention pertains to an absorbent article intended for female users, such as a sanitary napkin, a panty-liner, or an incontinence protector, comprising a liquid-pervious ~~surface-layer~~ first side, a liquid-impervious ~~surface-layer~~ second side, and an absorbent body enclosed between the two ~~surface-layers~~ sides, wherein the article further exhibits a wetting region, which is the region of the liquid-pervious ~~surface-layer~~ first side which is intended to first be wetted by body fluid emitted to the article.

Replace the paragraph bridging pages 3-4 with the amended paragraph as follows

An article designed in accordance with the invention is primarily characterized in that the ~~liquid-pervious surface-layer within the wetting region~~ of the user-facing side of the article is constituted of a hydrophilic absorbent material, at least at ~~the a~~ surface of the ~~layer~~ article which is intended to be facing the user during use, and in that the remaining parts of the ~~liquid-pervious surface~~ user-facing side of the article are constituted of a hydrophobic material.

Page 4, replace the first full paragraph with the amended paragraph as follows

The hydrophilic portion of the ~~liquid-pervious surface-layer~~ user-facing side may come into contact with the mucous membranes of the user in the genital region during use. Since the hydrophilic material is able to retain moisture, desiccation of the mucuous membranes is counteracted.

Replace the paragraph bridging pages 4-5 with the amended paragraph as follows

The article, according to the invention, may advantageously be provided with a hump, projecting from the ~~liquid-pervious surface layer~~ user-facing side, wherein the location of the hump on the article at least partially coincides with the wetting region. By means of arranging a hump at the wetting region, it is ensured that the hydrophilic region of the article is in contact against the mucous membranes of the user during use and prevents desiccation of these. Preferably, the hump is shaped in such a way that it conforms to the body shape of the user in the region in question, whereby the risk of placing the article in the wrong position is minimal. An anatomically correct design of a hump on the article contributes moreover to the article being directed into and being kept in the correction position in relation to the genitals of the user.

Page 6, replace the paragraph at lines 15-22, with the amended paragraph as follows

According to one embodiment of the invention, the liquid-pervious ~~surface layer~~ user-facing side comprises a laminate of a first liquid-pervious, hydrophobic material layer, arranged closest to the absorbent body, and a second liquid-pervious, hydrophilic material layer of substantially the same extension as the wetting region of the article, and intended to bear on the body of the user in the wetting region during use.

Page 6, replace the last full paragraph with the amended paragraph as follows

According to another embodiment of the invention, the liquid-pervious ~~surface layer~~ user-facing side comprises a laminate of a first liquid-pervious, hydrophobic

material layer, and a second liquid-pervious, hydrophilic material layer arranged closest to the absorbent body, inside the first material layer, wherein the hydrophobic material layer exhibits an opening of substantially the same extension as the wetting region of the article through which the hydrophilic layer is exposed.

Replace the paragraph at page 8, lines 15-28 with the amended paragraph as follows

The sanitary napkin 1 shown in Figs. 1 and 2 comprises a user-facing liquid-pervious ~~surface layer 2 arranged on the side of the sanitary napkin~~ first side 2, composed of first and second layers 14, 16, which is intended to be facing the user during use, a liquid-impervious layer surface layer 3 ~~arranged on the~~ defining an opposite second side of the sanitary napkin which is intended to be facing away from the user during use, and an absorbent body 4 enclosed between the ~~two surfaces~~ layers 14, 3. The ~~two surface~~ layers 14, 3 have essentially the same shape as the absorbent body 4, but a slightly larger extension in the plane, whereby they form a protruding edge 5 around the entire periphery of the absorbent body 4. The ~~surface~~ layers 14, 3 are mutually connected within the protruding edge 5, for example by gluing, sewing, or welding by means of heat or ultrasonics.

Page 10, replace the paragraph at lines 4-18 with the amended paragraph as follows

The liquid-pervious ~~surface layer 2 consists of a first layer 14~~ consists of conventional, hydrophobic liquid-pervious material. The first layer 14 is applied over the surface on the absorbent body 4 which is intended to be facing the user during use. Examples of hydrophobic surface materials are perforated plastic films, hydrophobic nonwoven materials, plastic scrims, or the like. A hydrophobic surface

material admits liquid through to the underlying absorbent body 4. Since the absorbent body is more hydrophilic ~~that~~ than the material in the first layer 14, the first layer 14 is almost completely drained of liquid after wetting. For this reason, and since the first layer 14 essentially lacks absorbency, the layer 14 remains dry even after wetting. Only a very small liquid quantity may remain on or inside the first surface layer 14.

Replace the paragraph bridging pages 10-11 with the amended paragraph as follows

During use, the sanitary napkin 1 is applied in the genital region of the user, with the crotch portion 8 of the sanitary napkin located at the urethra opening and the vaginal opening of the user. By means of this, emitted body fluid will hit the sanitary napkin 1 within a limited area on the user-facing first side 2 of the sanitary napkin, the so-called wetting region 15[. ~~Within the wetting region 15, the liquid-pervious surface layer 2 exhibits a second, occupied by the~~ hydrophilic and absorbent second layer 16. Thereby, examples of suitable, hydrophilic materials are absorbent, bonded cellulose layers, nonwoven materials and woven, knitted or crocheted textile materials, entirely or primarily consisting of hydrophilic fibres such as cotton, cellulose, rayon, peat moss, or the like. Since the hydrophilic material may come into contact with the mucous membranes in the genital region of the user during use, it is extremely important that the material is skin-friendly and does not contain any component which may cause allergic reactions, or other troubles.

Page 12, replace the first full paragraph with the amended paragraph as follows

During normal use of the sanitary napkin, i.e., at moderate liquid flows and on condition that the sanitary napkin is correctly positioned in relation to the body of the user, the first surface layer 14 will not primarily be wetted by liquid. The liquid which is emitted will instead first hit the second hydrophilic layer 16 and thereafter be absorbed further into the ~~the~~ absorbent body 4 where the liquid is distributed. Because of its low wettability, the first, hydrophobic layer 14 serves as a barrier against passage of liquid back out from the sanitary napkin. This implies that also a sanitary napkin which has absorbed a relatively large amount of liquid feels dry against the skin in the regions which surround the wetting region 15 of the sanitary napkin.

Page 12, replace the paragraph at lines 15-23, with the amended paragraph as follows

Another advantage with arranging the hydrophobic layer 14 inside the hydrophilic layer 16, so that an outer edge portion 16a of the wetting region 15 is bordered by the hydrophobic material of the layer 16 situated laterally outwardly of the wetting region, is that the transport into the absorbent body 4, of the liquid which is emitted to the sanitary napkin, is braked by the hydrophobic layer 14. This implies that the effect of the outer, hydrophilic layer 16 is magnified, since liquid more easily remains in this layer and is not drained into the absorbent body as easily as if the hydrophilic layer 16 had been in direct contact with the absorbent body 4.



Page 12, replace the paragraph at lines 24-31 with the amended paragraph as follows

In Figs. 3 and 4 another sanitary napkin 301 is shown, with the same basic construction as the sanitary napkin 1 shown in Figs. 1 and 2. Accordingly, the user-facing first side 302 of the sanitary napkin in Figs. 3 and 4 exhibits a liquid-pervious ~~surface~~ first layer 302 314, a liquid-impervious surface 303, and an absorbent body 304 ~~enclosed~~ disposed between the surface layers 302 314, 303. The surface layers 302 314, 303 are mutually connected ~~within~~ along an edge portion 305, protruding around the absorbent body 304.

Replace the paragraph bridging pages 12-13 with the amended paragraph as follows

The absorbent body 304 consists of two parts, of which a first part 304' is located closest to the liquid-impervious surface layer 303, and a second part 304" forms a longitudinal hump 317, which extends upwardly past the first layer 314 and along the longitudinal centre line 318 of the sanitary napkin.

Page 13, replace the first full paragraph with the amended paragraph as follows

The liquid-pervious ~~surface layer~~ first side 302 consist of two parts, of which the first part is constituted ~~of a~~ by the first layer 314, which is hydrophobic and essentially lacks absorbency of its own. The second part is constituted ~~of~~ by a second layer 316 which is hydrophilic, with a certain absorbency of its own. The second layer 316 is arranged at the wetting region 315 of first side of the sanitary napkin which coincides with a longitudinal central portion of the hump 317. Since the hump 317 is intended to penetrate a small distance in between the labia pudenda of

the user during use and separate these a little, the wetting region 315 will be in contact with the mucous membranes inside the labia pudenda during use. For this reason, it is important that the ~~surface layer 302 of the sanitary napkin in the layer~~ 316 in the wetting region 315 is not so dry that the hump 315 chafes or in another way irritates the mucous membranes.

Page 14, replace the paragraph at lines 11-20, with the amended paragraph as follows

The sanitary napkin 501 shown in Figs. 5 and 6 has a construction which is somewhat different from the construction of the earlier described sanitary napkins 1, 301. The sanitary napkin 501 comprises a liquid-pervious ~~surface layer~~ user-facing first side 502, and a liquid-impervious surface layer 503, ~~which together enclose an~~ and an absorbent body 504 therebetween. The liquid-impervious surface layer 503 is constituted of a thick, rigid plastic layer, which forms a hard, shape-permanent shell onto which the absorbent body 504 is arranged.

Replace the paragraph bridging pages 16-17 with the amended paragraph as follows

The absorbent body 504 of the sanitary napkin 501 further comprises an absorption layer 504", arranged over the hump 517, between this and a hydrophobic first layer 514 of the liquid-pervious ~~surface layer~~ first side 502. The absorption layer 504" consists of a hydrophilic material with good coherence, and with the ability to rapidly acquire and absorb body fluid. Useful absorption materials are for example hydrophilic, absorbent nonwoven materials, tissue layers, or air-laid, bonded cellulose layers. Such materials rapidly absorb liquid and retain part of the liquid inside the material, so that this remains moist or wet after wetting.

Page 17, replace the first full paragraph with the amended paragraph as follows

The hydrophobic, liquid-pervious surface layer ~~502~~ 514 is provided with an opening 520 at the wetting region 515 of the sanitary napkin. Thereby, the absorption layer 504", located inside the liquid-pervious surface layer 514, is exposed through the opening. During the use of the sanitary napkin 501, emitted body fluid will be absorbed directly by the absorption material in the absorption layer 504" at the wetting region 515. In this way, it is prevented that liquid flows out onto the liquid-pervious surface layer ~~502~~ 514 of the sanitary napkin and causes leakage.

Replace the paragraph bridging pages 17-18 with the amended paragraph as follows

Furthermore, it is avoided that liquid remains in the ~~surface layer~~ first side 502 and is smeared out across the surface thereof and onto the body of the user. Since the second part 504" of the absorbent body has the ability to absorb liquid, this implies that liquid which is emitted to the surface of the layer is absorbed into the layer 504" instead of being left on the surface. By means of absorbing body fluid, the absorption layer 504" becomes wet, or moist, since part of the liquid is retained in the layer. Thereby, the absorption layer 504" exhibits a moist, or wet surface bearing on the body of the user in the wetting region 515. As earlier mentioned, this is a significant advantage since the upper part of the hump 517 of the sanitary napkin 501 reaches in between the labia pudendi of the user and comes into contact with the sensitive mucous membranes in the genital region of the user, are thus protected against desiccation and irritation.



Page 18, replace the paragraph at lines 16-27, with the amended paragraph as follows

Fig. 6 shows a cross-section through the sanitary napkin 501, shown in Fig. 5. As is clearly evident from Fig. 6, the side edges 509, 510 of the sanitary napkin are bent in a direction downwards-inwards, ~~seen from the liquid-pervious surface layer 502~~. This implies that the sanitary napkin, along the side edges 109, 100, exhibits rounded ridges 525, 526 which during the use of the sanitary napkin are intended to bear on the body of the user, in the groin folds of the user. The rounded ridges 525, 526 extend along the side edges 509, 510 along almost the entire length of the sanitary napkin, but level somewhat at the front edge 511 and the rear edge 512, respectively.

Page 19, replace the first full paragraph with the amended paragraph as follows

The body-adapted, anatomically correct shape of the sanitary napkin, means that the sanitary napkin is kept safely and comfortably in position during use, without the need for special attachment members. Several factors influence the good attachment, such as the shape and the location of the hump, the two-dimensional shape of the sanitary napkin which is adapted to the available space between the legs of the user and which prevents the sanitary napkin from sliding backwards during use, the stiff shape-permanent liquid-pervious layer, and the longitudinal curvature according to the curvature on the body of the user. Because of the anatomically adapted shape, the sanitary napkin will always be correctly positioned in relation to the body of the user during use, so that the absorbent material in the wetting region 515 of the sanitary napkin always will be the portion of the sanitary

napkin which first is subjected to wetting, and which bears on the mucous membranes of the user during use. The parts of the first side 502 of the sanitary napkin which are in contact with the skin of the user during use, on the other hand, are ~~covered by the hydrophobic surface layer 502~~, which ensures that the skin is kept dry during use. A contributing reason for this is that the ~~surface layer~~ first side 502 prevents rewetting by liquid which has been absorbed into the absorbent body 504 of the sanitary napkin.